

REMARKS

Rejections under 35 USC §103(a)

Claims 1 and 3-7 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Hosonuma (U.S. Patent No. 4,643,529).

Responding to Applicants' previous response, the Examiner alleges as follows:

Hosonuma fails to specify that the length in the MD direction of the polarizing film is not smaller than five times as long as the length in the TD direction of the polarizing film.

However, Hosonuma teaches that a piece of the machine-sized film was cut with dimensions wherein the long length is 50 mm and the wide length is 20 mm, and the piece is longitudinally stretched by a ratio of 3.5 (column 5, lines 17-25), which means that the resultant stretched length in the long direction is 175 mm. While Hosonuma is silent as to whether the long length is still the MD direction length and the wide length is still the TD direction length, this case is an obvious choice due to the similarity in dimensional proportions. Thus even if the wide length, and hence the designated length in the TD direction did not shrink as a result of the longitudinal stretching of the piece of film, the final long length, and hence the designated length in the MD direction, is still not smaller than 5 times as long as the designated length in the TD direction of the polarizing film, for the purpose of providing the desired orientation and hence polarization (column 1, lines 45-53).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to have formed the polarizing film of Hosonuma, from a piece of the original film where the long length is still the MD direction length and the wide length is still the TD direction length, such that the length in the MD direction of the polarizing film is not smaller than five times as long as the length in the TD direction of the polarizing film, in order to obtain the desired orientation and hence polarization, as taught by Hosonuma.

(Office Action, page 3, line 12 to page 4, line 13).

Thus, the Examiner alleged that the description of Hosonuma is related to the recitation of "the length in the MD direction of the polarizing film is not smaller than five times as long as the length in the TD direction of the polarizing film" of claim 1. However, it is submitted that the present invention is different from Hosonuma.

According to the description of Column 5, lines 17-25 of Hosonuma, a film (90 μm thick) was cut into a piece 20 mm wide and 50 mm long. Using a tensile tester (Tensilon; manufactured by Toyo-Baldwin Co.), this piece was longitudinally stretched at 77°C by a ratio of 3.5 and then thermally fixed with an infrared heater. According to the description, the length in the longer direction of the film of Hosonuma is 175mm (= 50mm \times 3.5) and the length in the width direction thereof is 20 mm. However, the film of Hosonuma is stretched in the longer direction i.e. the MD direction not the TD direction. The polarizing film does not have an absorption axis in the TD direction of the polarizing film according to the example.

Thus, while the film of Hosonuma is stretched in the MD direction, the polarizing film of the present invention is stretched in the TD direction, and the polarizing film of the present invention is shrunk in the MD direction.

The polarizing film disclosed in Hosonuma does not satisfy at the same time the recitations "wherein the polarizing film has an absorption axis in the TD direction of the polarizing film," and "wherein the length in the MD direction of the polarizing film is not smaller than five times as long as the length in the TD direction of the polarizing film."

Moreover, claim 1 has further been amended to recite “wherein the polarizing film is produced by stretching the long polymer film in the TD direction and shrinking the long polymer film in the MD direction.” Hosonuma does not teach or suggest the recitation, either.

For at least these reasons, claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Hosonuma. Claim 3 has been cancelled making the rejection of the claim moot. Claims 4-7, depending from claim 1, also patentably distinguishes over Hosonuma for at least the same reasons.

Claims 8-10, 12, 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Hosonuma (U.S. Patent No. 4,643,529) as applied to claims 1 and 3-7 above, and further in view of Yoshida (US 2001/0030726).

Claims 8-10, 12, 16 and 17, directly or indirectly depend from claim 1. Claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Hosonuma as discussed above. Yoshida has not cited to remedy the deficiencies of Hosomuma discussed above.

For at least these reasons, claims 8-10, 12, 16 and 17 patentably distinguish over Hosonuma and Yoshida.

Claims 8, 11 and 13-17 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Hosonuma (U.S. Patent No. 4,643,529) in view of as applied to claims 1 and 3-7 above, and further in view of Abileah (U.S. Patent No. 5,907,378).

Claims 8, 11 and 13-17, directly or indirectly depend from claim 1. Claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Hosonuma as discussed above. Abileah has not been cited to remedy the

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deficiencies of Hosomuma discussed above.

For at least these reasons, claims 8, 11 and 13-17 patentably distinguish over Hosonuma and Abileah.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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